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air—and no flowering design springing from nothing and ending nowhere in particular. Common-sense and a little study of proportion which is open to every one, will always guide an amateur in the production of good work.

Having outlined the whole of the design with stem-stitch, the background may be begun. It should be darned with crewel or about two strands of filoselle. The length of the stitches taken in darning must be as even as possible, or the effect will be ragged and uneven. It may be lightly or heavily worked, according to the taste of the worker, but the great thing to aim at is evenness and accuracy of line. The material on which the work is done is generally a sufficient guide; but, if necessary, pencil lines may be drawn with a ruler as a help. The design itself may then be worked up to any extent. Solid pieces of embroidery in satin-stitch or long and short-stitch or French knots are very effective.

There are many honeycomb or lace backgrounds which may be used in the same way as darning; but they are not so satisfactory or artistic. A very beautiful effect may also be produced by varying the colors of the background, and letting them blend one into another. A specimen now on view at South Kensington has a background darned on linen in yellow, shading to orange and red, which has all the beauty of a sunset effect. When this is done the graduation of the colors must be very delicate, and no hard lines must be left in the darning; one shade should run up into another, so as to produce a general effect of blending.

The advantage of this work is that it may be done in the hand, which to the amateur is always an attraction. It is suitable for cushions, curtain borders, and bedspreads, but not for chair seats, as the rubbing of the grounding silk would soon make them look shabby. Any well-covered "all-over" design is suitable. In choosing one should bear in mind always the size of the spaces which are to be covered by the grounding. The smaller these are and the more evenly balanced the better the general effect will be.

LONDON, January 25, 1884.

ARACHNE.

STENCIL DECORATION.

THE mere manual part of rubbing color through the holes cut or "stencilled" through a sheet of tough paper is mechanical, but the arrangement of that color, so as to be artistic, raises the work to an art. For a really successful painting, no one part of any of the various patterns should attract the eye to the exclusion of the rest; one part of a design may be brighter than another, to bring that portion forward, and thus assist the design, but never so as to exclude

all appreciation of the softer tints surrounding it. Neither are great varieties of pattern desirable; a building painted with half a dozen well-grouped designs will look better than one upon which a complicated and incongruous medley of "stencils" has been used.

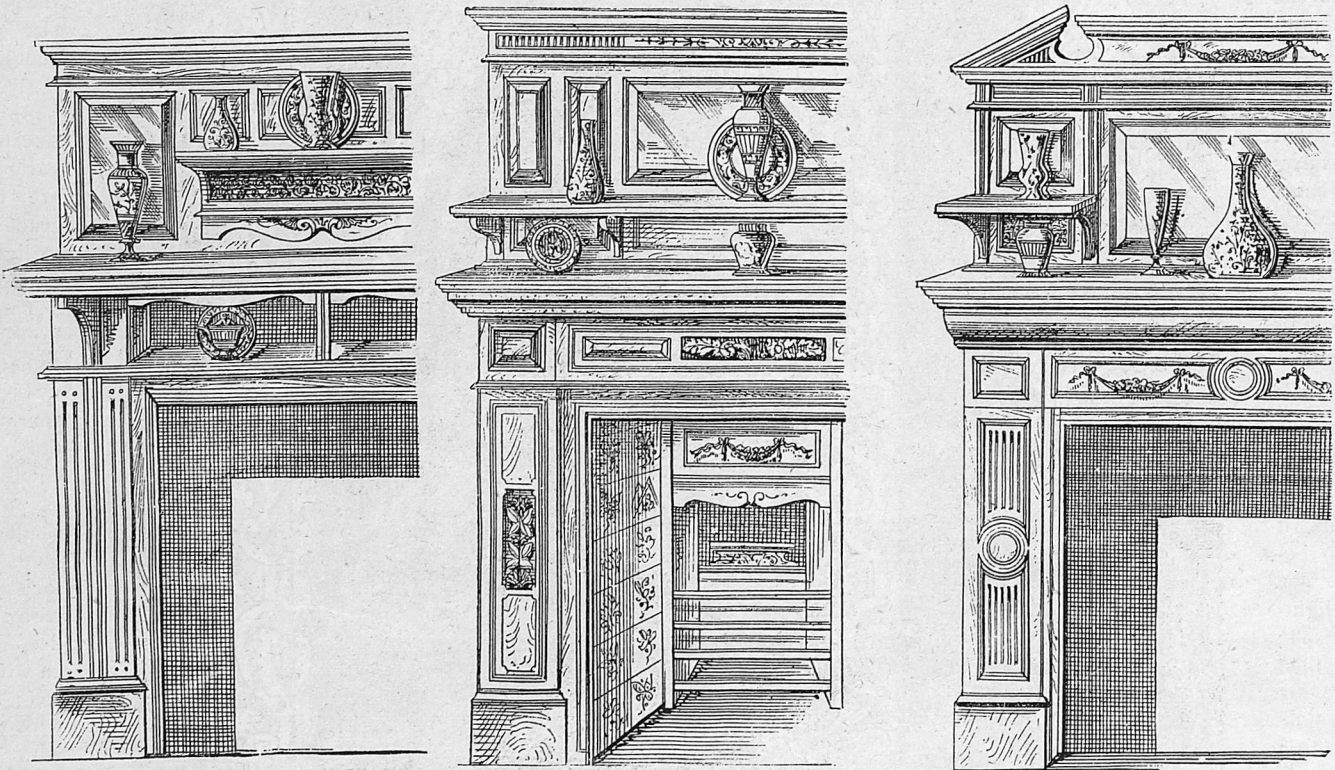
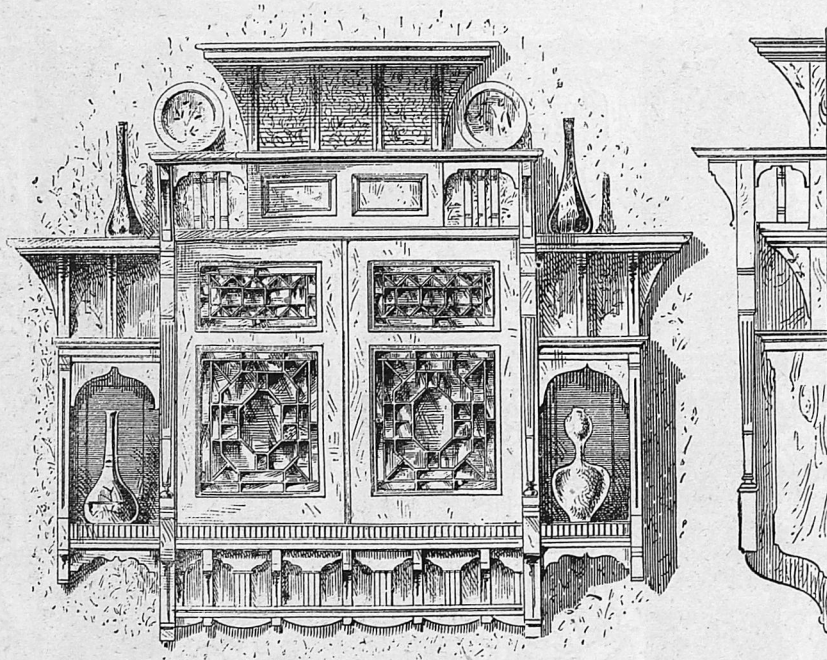
Stencilling is applied to the decoration of churches, public buildings, and private houses, and it is worked either in water or oil colors. The cost of water-color stencilling is trifling, as powder colors, size and water are all that are used, and it can be applied much more easily and quickly than oils; therefore it is generally used in decorating those parts of a building which are not likely to be rubbed against. Its one

richer tints are obtained by the use of oils than with water colors.

The following materials are required for water-color stencilling: Colors in powder, size, stencil brushes, stencil knife, mahlstick, T square, foot rule, earthen pots of various sizes, string and lead weight, knotting varnish, stencil patterns, and gilder's requisites. To these are added, in oil-color stencilling, linseed oil, japanner's gold size, turpentine, and patent driers. The powder colors can be obtained from any oil-and-color dealer, but must be well and finely ground, or, when mixed, they will be lumpy. The brushes made expressly for the work are short, thick-handled, and with strong hairs cut straight at the end. A few ordinary sable brushes are necessary to work in fine parts of the patterns. The foot rule, T square, and lead are required to mark out accurately upon the wall guiding lines, either horizontal, perpendicular, or slanting, before the pattern is applied, as unless these details are perfect the best design will fail.

The stencil plates or patterns are made either of thin tin or cartridge paper. The latter is the best material for an amateur; it is not so heavy to hold in the hand, and, when covered with knotting varnish, is very durable. The plates are bought ready cut out, or made as follows: Take a piece of strong cartridge paper, eighteen inches long and twelve inches wide (the width depends upon the width of the design), and upon this draw the design; leave an inch margin round it, and remember that the parts between the lines drawn

are those that are to be cut away, and through which the paint is rubbed on to the wall. Examine carefully every detail of the pattern, noting if, when cut, any part of it that should remain will become detached from want of a support, and where this occurs make what are called "tags," i.e., leave thin strips of paper across the cut-out parts, so as to support the portion likely to fall out by attaching it to a solid part. Never cut out any pattern until these "tags" have



MANTELPieces AND HANGING CABINET.

EXAMPLES OF MODERN ENGLISH WORK. FROM THE LONDON FURNITURE GAZETTE.

fault is a want of durability, which is noticeable as soon as it is subject to pressure or damp from the heated atmosphere of a room—the color, not being fixed in a substance that resists water, becomes dissolved and runs away. Oil color, though more expensive, is more durable, and will always resist atmospheric damp or pressure; it is, however, affected by internal damp, such as comes out from stone or brick not properly dried, the moisture from the wall forcing itself through the oil color and carrying the color with it in flakes. Oil colors are used after a wall has been plastered and "stopped" with a coating of glue size, for the lower parts of halls, sitting-rooms, and churches, and also where the decoration is required to be brilliant in color, as deeper and

been marked out, as should a portion of the design become detached the pattern is useless. In ecclesiastical and conventional designs these tag-lines are frequently left and not painted out when the work is finished, as they convey a certain stiffness to the design that suits the intention of the work, but in ordinary patterns they are painted over after the stencil plate has been removed. If the design cannot be completed in the length of one stencil plate, continue it upon a second, which so arrange that some of the pattern upon the last part of the first plate is repeated on the first part of the second, so that all difficulty of joining the two is obviated. Prepare several plates of the same design, as they become wet after use, and require to be left for a time to dry. To cut

out the pattern : Lay it upon a sheet of glass, and cut away the parts between the lines with a stencil knife, which is a short, sharp, two-edged blade let into a strong handle, and then cover the cartridge paper with a coating of knotting varnish.

The wall to be stencilled requires to be examined before commencing the work. Should it be of smooth plaster, there will be no difficulty in the matter, a brick wall covered with plaster being the best foundation for either oil or water stencilling. Should it be of unplastered stone or brick, melt a sufficient quantity of patent size in a saucepan, with twice its quantity of water, and brush this over the wall for water-color stencilling ; but for oil-color stencilling employ a regular workman to prepare the surface of the wall, as several coats of paint are necessary.

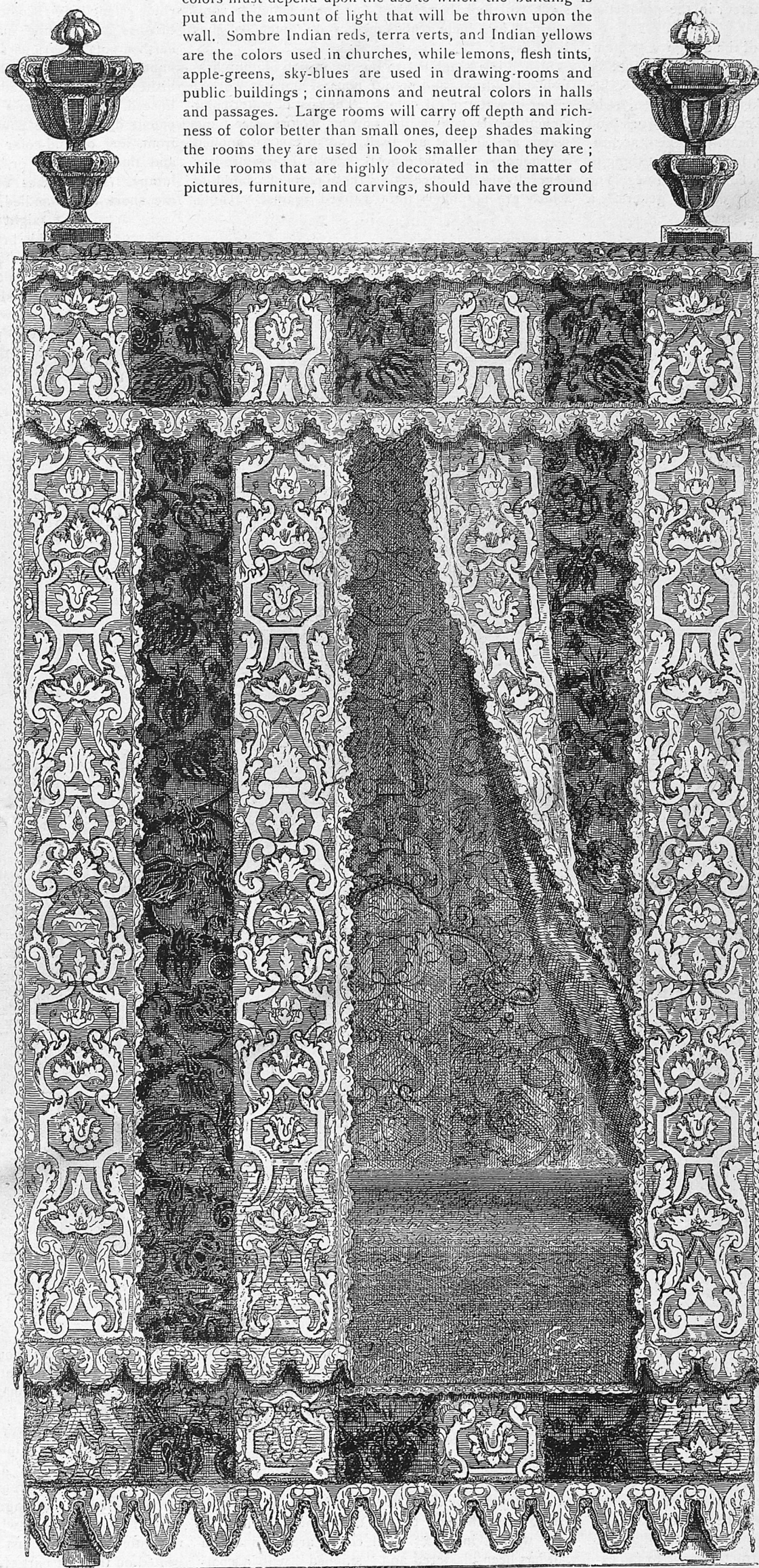
The white plaster is not a good ground color for any kind of painting ; therefore mend with plaster of Paris any portion of it that is not smooth, and then brush it over with a mixture made of a pound of glue dissolved in a gallon of hot water, and thickened with red lead and patent driers. While this is drying put into a bucket three pounds of gilder's whitening, cover it with water, and leave until broken up ; then pour off the water and stir with a thick stick. Melt in another vessel some patent size, stain it well with a powder color of the tint the ground is to be, pour this upon the whitening and mix it well in, then strain before it is at all cold. The tint will dry rather lighter than when first mixed ; therefore allow for this, and also endeavor to mix enough for the whole wall at one time, as it is difficult to match the color in a second making. Let the mixture stand until it looks like a weak jelly, and then apply it to the wall with large brushes. Two people should put on the color, one working from the top of the wall and the other from the bottom, as the ground must be entirely covered at once, no retouching or going over being possible. Umber, indigo, light red, black, chrome yellow, terra vert, and Indian red will make most of the ground colors used,

the depth of tint being regulated by the amount of color mixed with the whitening. The shades selected for ground colors must depend upon the use to which the building is put and the amount of light that will be thrown upon the wall. Sombre Indian reds, terra verts, and Indian yellows are the colors used in churches, while lemons, flesh tints, apple-greens, sky-blues are used in drawing-rooms and public buildings ; cinnamons and neutral colors in halls and passages. Large rooms will carry off depth and richness of color better than small ones, deep shades making the rooms they are used in look smaller than they are ; while rooms that are highly decorated in the matter of pictures, furniture, and carvings, should have the ground

color of their walls of subdued neutral shades, so that they are simple backgrounds to the rest of the ornamentation.

The ground color dry, mark out with the aid of the foot rule the horizontal lines on the wall in between which the pattern is to be placed, and with the lead weight and string, the perpendicular lines ; for the latter cover the string with whitening, suspend it from the top of the wall in the place where a straight line is required, and the lead will keep it hanging down correctly ; run the fingers down the string so that the whitening on it comes off on to the wall, or hold it by the lead and give it a sharp twang on to the wall. Prepare the paints in separate pots, and supply a stencil brush for each color. For water-color stencilling mix well-ground powder color with patent or ordinary size ; for oil colors mix powder color with japaner's gold size, turpentine, linseed oil, and some patent drier. The turpentine will deaden the glossiness of the gold size and the oil, but it should only be used sparingly, as the color must be thick, and the turpentine makes it thin. The various shades of color are made by mixing crude color with white to lighten it, with black to deepen it.

The four colors most used should be indigo, Indian red, ochre, and white, and brighter tints sparingly added. These tints require to be deepened and enriched, so as to produce various shades. Thus : cobalt blue, lighten with white for sky blue, and deepen with indigo ; indigo, deepen with black, lighten with white and crimson ; vermilion, lighten with yellow, and deepen with Vandyck brown ; Indian red, lighten with vermilion, deepen with black ; crimson, lighten with vermilion, deepen with black ; green, lighten with various yellows and deepen with black or indigo ; ochre, lighten with white, deepen with red ; chocolate, make with Indian red and Vandyck brown, and lighten with vermilion and deepen with black ; neutral tint, make with white, Indian red, and a little indigo ; gray, with black, white, and a little red ; purple, with blue and carmine, in large or



SEVENTEENTH CENTURY OAKEN BEDSTEAD WITH HANGINGS OF VELVET AND DAMASK.

FROM THE "MARSHAL'S CHAMBER" IN THE CHÂTEAU D'EFFIAT.

small quantities, and with or without white, according to the shade required; yellow, deepen with red into orange, and lighten with white; a citron yellow make by adding a little black and white to the yellow. The colors that contrast are, yellow with purple, red with green, blue with orange, yellow orange with blue purple, blue green with red orange, yellow green with red purple; gray can be introduced into all combinations of color, and is in perfect harmony with either blue or crimson.

Take the pattern and hold it with the left hand firmly against the wall, keeping it straight and in its right place with the aid of the lines already marked upon the wall; fill a stencil brush with the required color, which take care is thick and not inclined to run; hold the brush upright, and dab it through the cut-out part of the pattern which that particular color is intended to fill. Hold the stencil plate quite close to the wall all the time, so that there is no chance of the color running beyond the holes in the pattern. Color through all the holes in this manner, then remove the stencil plate and carefully wipe it dry, put it on one side, take up another plate, fit this, as to the pattern, into the preceding lines, paint as before, and continue until the work is finished. The paint, if properly mixed, will not run at all, but will lie upon the ground color with sharp outlines and in firm masses. Gild over with gold leaf any part of the design that requires enriching, and put a narrow band of dark paint round all parts that are gilded. Take the small brushes and paint over the "tags," or any parts of the design not perfect, but never attempt any shading, as the character of the work will be entirely spoiled if shading is introduced.



DETAIL OF BED-HANGING.
FROM THE CHÂTEAU D'EFFIAT.

Sometimes a very minute pattern has to be executed in oil colors of many shades. To obviate any chance of these shades running together and becoming confused, place the stencil pattern on the wall, and instead of brushing the paint through, outline every part of the design through the openings on to the wall with a chalk pencil; then remove the plate, and paint in the various parts with a painter's small brush. Small separate devices, such as rounds, diamonds, fleurs-de-lis, crosses, and church roses, are frequently added to a border, after it has been painted on the wall, to enlarge and beautify it. These devices are cut out separately and applied at the worker's discretion. Straight and broad horizontal lines always mark out the lower and upper parts of set borders; these are cut on separate stencil plates to the larger patterns.

When the work is completed for the day, wash the water-color stencil brushes in water, but leave the oil-color brushes to soak in oil, and when the painting is finished, wash them first in turpentine and then with soap and water.

ARTISANS AND ARTISTS.

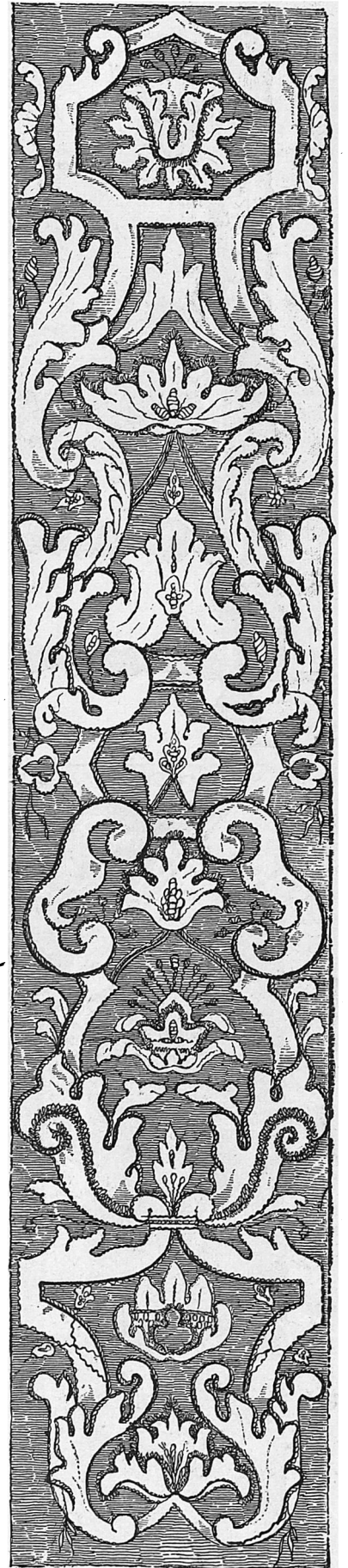
IN the middle of the fourteenth century a society of artists flourished at Florence, and among the members were found "decorative artists," working in wood and metal. The

London architect, asks "Why is it so?" and answers his own question. "It is," he says, "because the appreciation that Dello enjoyed is not forthcoming. The majority of the few rich and cultured people who could appreciate, hardly ever look at new furniture, their way of encouraging contemporary artists who devise works in wood and metal being shown in patronizing the curiosity-monger. This fashion of seeking in curiosity shops for mobilia, whether of carved work, of marquetry, or what not, is most pernicious to the development of what national art-power there may yet be latent among us. That artists should by example give currency to this fashion is to be deplored; but still more is it to be deprecated that the cabinet-maker should have given them cause by neglecting or discouraging the artistic element in his work." In this country there is less cause for complaint in this direction; probably because the resources of the bric-à-brac shops are much more limited than in England. The first-class American cabinet-maker has come to be appreciated since he has proved himself worthy of encouragement. A few of our best artists have abandoned the easel to devote themselves entirely to decorative work. But it must be confessed that we are still a long way off from the golden days of Dello, the "decorative artists" of Florence, and the casket-makers, gilders, and varnishers who were the glory of the Institute of Painters at Venice.

SOME RARE FRENCH FURNITURE.

WE give herewith illustrations of a bed and a chair from the Château d'Effiat, a famous castle built in the early part of the seventeenth century by Antoine Coiffier Ruzé, Marshal of France. This château stood near the little village of Aigueperse in the Department of the Puy-de-Dôme, and the original furniture, preserved with great care, continued for many years to garnish its unused apartments. At last, in 1856, the château, furniture, and entire estate were sold at public auction, and the Musée de Cluny and the government collections of rare and antique furniture were enriched with the principal pieces from the "Marshal's chamber," the "Cardinal's chamber," and the "green chamber," and also with a number of chairs of state. The bed shown herewith, from the "Marshal's chamber," is a strong but simple frame of oak, completely covered with hangings formed of alternate strips of brocaded Genoese velvet and silk damask, the rich designs of which are outlined with passementerie. The details of these strips are also shown. On page 94 are two views of an oaken chair of state from the same château, with details of the ornamental covering which is of the same handsomely embroidered material and general style as the bed-hangings.

THE colors really indispensable for mural decoration are very few, and happily those are mostly of good character for permanency. It should be carefully borne in mind, however, that the permanence of most pigments is influenced to a great degree by circumstances. Thus a color which is highly eligible in oil may be doubtful in distemper, and absolutely inadmissible in fresco; and, vice versa, many colors useful in tempera do not admit oil. The limited palette again of fresco is owing to the presence of lime, which is destructive to vegetable colors, but has no influence upon the earths. So also one color may be antagonistic to another, and render it fugitive in conjunction or juxtaposition, whereas separate, each may be regarded as permanent. But besides all these considerations, and putting aside the question of internal damp which destroys all colors and all media alike, the decorator must take into his calculation the adverse influences of external damp (from condensation of breath) and the action of light, oxygen, shade, sulphuretted hydrogen or foul air, all of which affect the pigments more or less.



DETAIL OF BED-HANGING.
FROM THE CHÂTEAU D'EFFIAT.